



WESTERN DAKOTA ENERGY ASSOCIATION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

April 5, 2021

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Testimony of:

Geoff Simon, Lobbyist #144
in support of HB 1452
Senate Appropriations Committee

Chairman Holmberg and Committee members:

On behalf of the city, county and school district members of the Western Dakota Energy Association (WDEA), we wish to express strong support for House Bill 1452 to establish a clean sustainable energy authority and a clean sustainable energy fund. Our association represents North Dakota civic leaders and citizens who live in the oil, gas and coal-producing counties. The livelihood of many of these communities depend on the success of the energy industry, and they in turn provide vital services that support energy development.

Our association board of directors includes county commissioners, mayors, council members and school superintendents from communities throughout western North Dakota. The legislation before you is about the future of North Dakota's fossil fuel industry, and our member communities will live in that future. The future could be bleak if the anti-fossil fuel agenda of the Biden administration prevails, or it could be very bright if we are able to embrace new technologies to ensure the continued economic viability and sustainability of the oil, gas and coal industries.

Some might ask why WDEA should have a member on the authority that would be created by HB 1452. It's because our members live in energy-producing counties, so have a powerful incentive to see the industry succeed. Our members have expertise and experience in fostering energy research and development. Two former WDEA presidents currently serve on the Oil & Gas Research Council, and another of our board members serves on the Lignite Research Council.

WDEA wishes to thank Senator Holmberg and Representative Bosch for sponsoring this important legislation, and urges the committee's strong support of HB 1452.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.